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**STATEMENT OF THE POSITION
OF THE IOWA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE
ON THE STATUS OF CREATIONISM
AS A SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION
OF NATURAL PHENOMENA**

31 January 1981

Current attempts to introduce 'scientific creationism' into the science classroom are strongly opposed by the Iowa Academy of Science on the grounds that creationism when called 'scientific' is a religious doctrine posed as science. It is contrary to the nature of science to propose supernatural explanations of natural events or their origins. With its appeal to the supernatural, creationism is outside the realm of science.

Creationist organizations that are advocating the teaching of 'scientific creationism' in science classrooms include members purported to be scientists who have examined the evidence and have found creationism to be a superior alternative to evolution. They claim to know of evidence that supports the idea of a young earth and that shows evolution to be impossible. Much of this 'evidence' is inaccurate, out of date, and not accepted by recognized paleontologists and biologists. The total membership of these 'scientific' creationist groups constitutes only a fraction of one percent of the scientific personnel in this country. Most of them are not trained in biology or geology, the areas in which professional judgments are made in the field of evolutionary theory. They often misrepresent the positions of respected scientists and quote them out of context to support their own views before audiences and government bodies. They are driven by the notion that all explanations of natural events must conform to their preconceived creationist views. These tactics are used to give the uninformed public the false impression that science itself is confused. Then a supernatural explanation is proposed to bring order out of apparent chaos.

The Iowa Academy of Science urges legislators, school administrators, and the general public not to be misled by the tactics of these so-called 'scientific creationists.' The Academy respects the right of persons to hold diverse religious beliefs, including those which reject evolution, but only as matters of theology or faith, not as secular science. Creationism is not science and the Academy deplores and opposes any attempt to disguise it as science. Most recognized scientists find no conflict between religious faith and acceptance of evolution. They do not view evolution as being anti-religious. They have no vested interest in supporting evolution as do the 'scientific creationists' in supporting creationism, but merely consider evolution as being consistent with the best evidence.

The Iowa Academy of Science feels strongly that the distinction between science and religion must be maintained. A state with one of the highest literacy rates and with the highest scientific literacy scores in the nation, and one which prides itself on the individuality of its citizens, should discriminate in its public education system between what is science and what is not science."